

# BEACON NEWSLETTER

ISSUE No. 20

OCTOBER 2019

**This year has been a tricky one weather-wise, and now we're facing the clear-up following two lots of heavy flooding that has affected much of the natural riverbank restoration our partners and volunteers have undertaken in the catchment. It is not all doom and gloom though with progress being made against INNS and training for volunteers. Read on to find out more ...**

## VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Last month volunteers from various organisations and backgrounds underwent certified training to enable them to safely use herbicides near water. This brings us to 30 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 volunteers adopt and treat a stretch of river, allowing the Project Officer to move on and work downstream elsewhere. 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.



## WORKING PARTIES

Giant Hogweed spraying was carried out in Lymm and Hale to continue the work done in these areas last year. The reduction in Giant Hogweed is really visible now. Riverbank restoration was done in May, with two areas of woody debris in the water thinned out, willows pinned along the banks and over-hanging trees trimmed in Ashley and Wilmslow. Balsam bashing has been done on the Carrs, Rossmill Woodland, at Avro Golf Club and with Friends of Bowdon Bollin. In each area the density of balsam has decreased thanks to the work of hundreds of volunteers over the years. In total from April to August there were over 360 volunteer hours spent on working parties. To find a working party near you and get involved please click [here](#).

## REASEHEATH COLLEGE

In April three students from Reaseheath College came to work with us for a fortnight. During their time on the Bollin they were involved in scrub clearance on the Carrs, Giant Hogweed spraying at Lymm and river clean-up and willow spiling on Birkin Brook. The students thoroughly enjoyed their time with us, and the range of tasks presented for them to do. If you or your students would benefit from a work placement on the Bollin, please get in touch with us on the details overleaf.



## ENVIRONMENT AGENCY WATER QUALITY ARCHIVE

The EA Water Quality Archive provides data on water quality measurements. Samples are taken at points around England, and can be from rivers, lakes, ponds, canals or groundwaters. They are taken for a number of purposes including compliance, investigation of pollution or environmental monitoring. The archive provides data on measurements and samples dating from 2000. You can view the archive [here](#).



### RIVERBANK RESTORATION

Help BEACON restore riverbank following the flooding with Friends of the Bowdon Bollin by planting and weaving live willow and hazel. Bring your wellies and jump in on:

**Monday 23rd September**  
**9:30am—3pm**  
**Ashley Mill Lane Layby, Ashley WA14 3PT**

### MERSEY RIVERS WEEK

The first Mersey Rivers Week was held from June 17<sup>th</sup> to June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019 . A variety of different working parties and activities were held as part of this week to celebrate and thank volunteers for the work they do to conserve rivers in the Mersey Basin, and also to let members of the public know about this work.

The main event of the week was a BEACON Bioblitz, in collaboration with the Bollin Valley partnership and Cheshire East Rangers at Riverside Park in Macclesfield. On the day there were guided walks running, a self-led bioblitz trail, an area to try wildlife art with a local artist, and exploration areas for bug hunting, river safari and pond dipping. Approximately 200 people attended the event this year and some had returned from the previous year, and over 100 plant and animal species were recorded. Our next Bioblitz will be on 6th June 2020.



### MANCHESTER MUSEUM GETTING #INNSVOLVED

Invasive Species Week is a national week held every year by the Non-Native Species Secretariat, and this year marked the fourth INNS week. BEACON got involved by holding a weekend of events at Manchester Museum. There were information boards up for people to view and learn more about invasive species and the impact they can have. Children could join in craft activities to create their own ponds and even add invasive water weeds, and there was an interactive 'Find the Hitchhiker' activity too. The message for this event was to encourage everyone to be aware of what is growing in their garden or pond, and to dispose of any waste plant materials or cuttings responsibly. We spoke to 271 people over the course of the weekend. To find out more about this and Be Plant Wise, please visit [here](#).



### FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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