

Easington Annual Parish Meeting 2021

Spurn National Nature Reserve

Report

At Spurn we have had to adapt to the pandemic and make sure visitors, volunteers and staff are kept safe. Our operations at Spurn have had to change but we are just starting to open-up more following the Covid guidance.

Before the pandemic hit last March, we managed to present our Spurn Young Rangers with their John Muir Award certificates. They really put in a lot of effort to gain the awards by doing practical conservation tasks, surveys, events, building homes for wildlife and completing various environmental challenges. We hope that this has inspired them to continue with conservation work in the future. As restrictions ease, we hope to re-establish this group.

During the winter, our practical task volunteers came down on Wednesdays and made sure the site was managed for wildlife. Two large areas of scrub were opened-up at the Point to allow the wildflowers to thrive and create a different habitat. All we need is a bit of rain to make the vegetation grow.

Our volunteers also installed a large John-O-Groats style sign at the point to act as a focal point for visitors. You cannot miss it really.

This year we have had cattle back on Chalk Bank for the first time since 2007. Combined with the grazing flock of Hebridean sheep they have opened-up the meadow and created a short sward so that a greater variety of flowering plants and fungi can come through. The knock-on effect of this is more insects and food for the birds too.

Over the winter months volunteers and trainees have controlled the brown-tail moth caterpillars on the point and lighthouse area. Although there are a few still about we hope that they will not strip all of the Sea Buckthorn buds so there will be some berries available for the autumn migrants.

Recently we installed a swallow nesting barn where the old hide used to be on Chalk Bank. Not an easy task but we hope the swallows appreciate it and set up home there. This is part of a degree project for one of our Spurn Trainees.

Over the summer months our trainees and volunteers will be undertaking a number of surveys of the wildlife found on Spurn.

Another major project on Spurn is the Eel Grass and Oyster re-introduction scheme. Again volunteers, staff and trainees have got stuck in (sometimes literally) planting eel grass seedlings, washing thousands of oysters and helping with the logistics of this ambitious project.

Lastly our military historians have done an amazing job of revealing the magazines and gun emplacements at the point. We were stunned by how well preserved the hold-fast was and it is now accessible to visitors.

Overall, despite the pandemic, closures and furlough, a lot has been achieved. We look forward to welcoming visitors back to Spurn, both old and new to see what has been happening.

The Spurn Team

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