



## **Forthcoming Events for your Diary**

NB. All lectures will take place at the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre.  
Tea will be available from 3.30 pm. Lectures start at 4.00 pm.

**End of season meeting  
at 4pm on Thursday 3rd November  
Appraisal of the last year, followed by  
cheese and wine.**

**Please note that some dates have been changed to  
accommodate speakers. Further details on page 7.**

**20th October - Lyme Regis harbourmaster.**

**3rd November - End of season meeting.**

**1st December - Professor J. Rose.**

### **2012**

**26th January - Mrs P. Rose.**

**23rd February - Annual Dinner.**

### **Chris Horton Chairman of the Friends writes:**

Once again The Centre has had a very successful summer season and, yet again, I am able to report that members of The Friends were very prominent in supporting the Wardens. Visitors find it very pleasing to be greeted with a smile and welcome when they walk into the Centre for the first time – thanks to those volunteers who give their time to be behind the desk. One of the very important activities which generates financial support is the "Guided Fossil Walk". During the summer groups of more than 100 have been a common feature but, again, without some of our volunteers giving their time and expertise the Wardens would have not been able to take such large groups.

So many thanks to everyone involved and to those who would like to help please come and give your support – we cannot have too much!

We have had our two barbeques during the summer though on both occasions the weather was unkind which did somewhat reduce the level of enjoyment. Thanks to the Wardens however for their work in setting up and clearing away.

We now move towards our winter programme which Jean Kesterton has arranged for us – please make a note of the dates and try to support them.

### **Chairman of Trustees - Richard Salisbury**

Meirel, Phil, Nikki, Lynsey and Jacky have had a very busy summer and they should be congratulated for their efforts. Relative peace has descended upon the Centre after a hectic but productive few months. The Fossil Walks have been extremely well attended and a big thank you to all the Volunteers who have helped out, sometimes at very short notice.

We have achieved our targets for the year so far, with overall income increasing, and we may have managed to increase our sales by the 12p per visitor, with which I challenged you all in the Feb Newsletter, well done.

Our next goal is to produce a 5 year plan for the development of the Centre, it is vitally important that the Centre continuously evolves, our visitors need to see change, the Warden Team and David Harfield are working on this. If anybody has ideas please let Meirel or me know.

Many of you will probably have noticed on the sliding front door, the recognition that the Centre is now a Jurassic Coast Quality Business, having completed the Jurassic Coast Quality Business Scheme demonstrating

high standards of operation, customer service, quality assurance and commitment to the values of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site. This is a feather in the cap for all associated with the Centre and a valuable publicity tool.

### **Meirel Whaites - Senior Warden**

2011 has been another bumper year for the Centre with our visitor numbers up on last year, school visits up on last year and in general not looking too bad at all....until you come to the Warden team who are all about a foot shorter! The season started in March and the team, basically haven't stopped since. Although the holidays are over and we have had some quieter days we will only have a week of respite before the schools are back in again with September and October almost fully booked and schools already booking in for 2012.

It looks like we will break our record on school visits again this year, and have already broken the visitor centre numbers for the same period last year with 75,250 visitors up to the 8<sup>th</sup> September.

In May we put in a bid for funding to the Curry Fund for our "Charmouth Dinosaur" project and have been successful with a contribution of £600.00. This, in conjunction with part of the O'Connor family donation means that the project will run over this Autumn. There will be involvement with the Junior Wardens and the culmination of the project will be on the first weekend in October working with Darrell Wakelam (local artist). We will be creating a 3D model of the dinosaur for display in the Centre.

While on the subject of fundraising, the plant sale in May raised over £200.00 for the Centre's Junior Wardens and I am sure there are a few gardens in Charmouth that have blossomed as a result this summer. My thank must to Mum and Dad for supplying the plants!!!

Looking to the winter season ahead, we still have many events running including the fossil fantastic days and weekends, rocks and fossils weekend, our usual fossil hunting walks and the Jurassic Art and Craft Fayre on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December.

My thanks again to all the Friends for their support, especially over the busy season and I look forward to seeing your faces at the winter lectures and meetings.

Best wishes, Meirel Whaites (Senior Warden)

### **Phil Davidson - Geological Warden**

As if by clockwork, the summer has ended, the families have gone home and the weather has changed and it feels very wintery here. This year has been exceptionally busy and I think we have been flat out since April. I really enjoy the autumn and winters here, it's a chance to take stock.

We have all started work on a 5 year interpretation plan for the Centre. Our aim is to make the Centre tell a story which encompasses, fossils (of course!), the marine life, the local landscape and the Centre's role in the middle of it all. We want to make good use of our existing display panels and move things around so they fit into the Centre's story and its role on the coast.

We also plan to have a look at our website and how it is working. Since we revamped the website in June 2010 we have had around 30,000 views and it has been a great success. One particular thing which has worked well has been the online booking system. This has not only made life easier for the Wardens, but also the friends on the front desk.

Lyme Regis is hosting an annual palaeontology conference next week which I will be attending. It will be great to catch up with old friends, hear about what is happening in the world of fossils and to spread the good word of the Centre.

Of course, I am ever hopeful that I will find a myriad of amazing fossils this winter, but we will see.....!

### **Nikki Hills - Marine Warden**

It's been a great year for our marine events. The Rockpool Rambles have been really popular. Thankfully I have had help with these this year as Lyndsey is a very keen rockpooler and Natalie, one of our younger volunteers, has once again been a fantastic help. Natalie comes on holiday to the area in Easter and during Marine Week in the summer and spends everyday of her holiday helping us at the Centre (she also makes delicious Rocky Road!) Marine Week was mad as always with boat trips, an aquarium tour and of course dressing up as pirates.

The Junior Wardens were here over the summer term helping us to clean the tanks, do a beach litter survey and we also had a competition to see who would win out of Jurassic creatures and present day marine life. Naturally Phil was backing the Jurassic team and I was on the side of the present day marine life. So, what was the result? Well I don't feel it's important to say who won as it's the taking part that counts (yes, you

guessed it the Jurassic team won but the less said about that the better!) The Junior Wardens will be starting back at the Centre soon for the new term. We have got loads of fun activities planned for them as part of the Charmouth Dinosaur project. They will be learning all about the Charmouth Dinosaur, how the fossils are found and prepared and playing detective to work out what killed our dinosaur...it should be lots of fun!

### **Lyndsey Bird - Seasonal Warden**

Well it's been a busy summer and I can't believe the holidays are over already! The walks have been fully booked and with 2 talks going on simultaneously most days the Tv slides have proved a great visual aid in the education room to accommodate so many people, allowing the smaller fossils to be seen by everyone. I have thoroughly enjoyed taking out the busy walks over the summer and I'm always amazed by what people find, having a little luck myself, finding part of an ichthyosaur jaw and a plesiosaur back bone.

Before the summer holidays started I was set the challenge of coming up with a new craft activity to run along side ammonite slice polishing and fossil mould making over the summer. After securing a generous donation from the Friends for set up costs the magic monsters and magic marine creature activities were ready to go. The activity has proved popular with children of all ages, amazed as they watch their creation magically shrink before their eyes and some parents couldn't resist a go too!

I am currently working on developing a new interactive game for the Centre to help answer one of the most popular questions we're asked "which rocks are the ammonites in?" The prototype is almost complete and will be trialled this autumn with school groups and the general public. So come and have a go! Any feed back would greatly be appreciated.

### **Charmouth Natural History Group - Kate Stapleton**

19th July - The day started off not that nice but it cheered up half way through the day. Our trip was to Powerstock Common, for butterflies and flowers. As we walked along the path we came across a plant with yellow flowers across between a clover and a vetchling looking. It is a localised species, not very common, called Ribbed Melilot. Other flowers were Hemp Agrimony, Rest Harrow, Toadflax, Water forget-me-not and Honeysuckle. Powerstock common is one of a few places where the

Silver-Wash Fritillary butterflies can be seen on a regular basis year on year. Other butterflies we saw were Marble White, Small Skipper, Green-Veined White, Ringlets, Gatekeeper, and Red Admiral. Bugs/Moths-Burnet Moths, Silver Y, Oak Tree Crickets, and Common Green-Bush Grasshopper. Birds were very quiet due to the time of year only a Raven and a Blackcap heard/seen. 16th August-the day started of the same way as our previous trip, but more wind this time. This time our trip was to Cerne Abbas and the fields surrounding the great man himself! This site is one of a few in West Dorset to have the Adonis Blue butterflies which some of the group saw despite the windy conditions and a single Common Blue butterfly. But it was the flowers which won the day! We saw masses of Bellflower and Harebell with Eyebrights. Autumn Gentian they where just starting to flower are becoming a rare sight as the chalk meadows are fast disappearing from our countryside. Devils-Bit Scabious was flowering, this is the food plant for the Brown Argus Butterfly another rarity in this area. We also saw Ragwort covered in cinnebar moth caterpillars even though it is poisonous to most animals, the caterpillars seem to cope with the poison! Another plant which is a chalkland speciality is the Rock Rose, yellow flower. Only one orchid this time a Pyamidal.

Local Sightings-Seawatching produced on 5th Sept and 6th Sept- 75c Gannets, 3c Common Scoter, 8c Shags, 3c Sooty Shearwaters, 2c Cormorants, 2c Balearic Shearwaters and 2c Guillemots. Raven flew over head.

Here are the remaining dates for your diaries - 20th Sept-Portland-meet at the W.D.D.C car park in Lower Sea Lane at 9am, bring a picnic lunch. 18th Oct-Hawkswood - meet at the W.D.D.C car park in Lower Sea Lane at 9.30 am, bring a picnic lunch. 15th Nov-Black Hole Marsh/Seaton-meet at the W.D.D.C car park in Lower Sea Lane at 1.30pm. 13th Dec - Harbour Inn, Axmouth. Xmas/pub lunch, time to be arranged nearer the time. Please call Kate Stapleton on 01297 560255 if you are interested in any of the above, better still join our group, have fun, and learn something new everyday!

## **Lectures**

### **The usual format for the lectures etc are as follows:**

Thursday 20th October 2011

Mr Grahame Forshaw MNI MBE, Lyme Regis Harbour Master -  
'The Harbour and local issues.'

Thursday 3rd November 2011

End of season meeting.

Thursday 1st December 2011 -

Professor J. Rose.

'The earliest humans of Britain - 1/4 million years.'

Thursday 26th January 2012 - Mrs P Rose -

'Glaciers I have known.'

Thursday 23rd February 2012 - Annual Dinner

### **Saving money - Reducing Newsletter costs.**

With the ever increasing postal costs (2<sup>nd</sup> class letter is now 36p) coupled to the cost of paper, envelopes and printing, the cost to the Centre of mailing a newsletter is a minimum of 50 pence. At the present time we send out approximately 70 newsletters by post, costing the Friends about £35 per mailing. Each time the Newsletter is published it appears on our website in the form of a pdf file, which can be opened up on your computer and read, or if necessary, downloaded and printed off. (Go to the 'Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre' website, select on the top bar 'Friends of CHCC' and then 'Friends Newsletter'.) So far approximately 30 Friends have agreed to receive their Newsletter notification by email. We would like to substantially increase this number and therefore if you are willing to receive notification of Newsletter publishing via email may we please have your email address? Please send email addresses to [john@berridge-online.com](mailto:john@berridge-online.com) Your email address will not be passed on to any other organisation.

**Friend's Committee meetings - 10.00 am. The Elms**

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September**

**Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2012**

**Total number of visitors**

**as of 11-09-2011**

**Schools: 4,650**

**Visitors: 76,017**

**Grand total: 80,667**

Newsletter of The Friends of Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre  
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