

April 2011

## ATLANTIC ARRAY

A progress report on this major project was given to the Our Coast course in January by Peter Crone for npower renewables. Copies available on request.

### SUMMARY

Cost: £4.5 billion

1500 MW, 250 turbines, supplying 1.1m homes

Great engineering challenges - deep water, large turbines & challenging wind and waves

Novel technologies

Local impacts:

Connected to grid at Alverdiscott

Cable route - Cornborough to

Alverdiscott - preferred option

Construction Port - Not Devon,

possibly Milford Haven

Operations Port - Ilfracombe or

Appledore considered

Timing - consents 2012-13, build

2015 - 2019, Operations 2016 - 2040

Having a world leader in wind energy generation 14 km from ND coast (16 km to Wales) will bring challenges as well as opportunities on an unprecedented scale.

An alternative renewable source, tidal power, was the subject of Tara Hooper's talk "Taw Barrage: a case study", the subject of her PhD research. Her intention - to identify and cost the pros and cons of estuary barrages in principle (none is currently proposed for the Taw), particularly the value put on the environment and the price people would be willing to pay to avoid or mitigate impact.

These two talks were part of the programme of 20 talks which comprise the Our Coast course central to Coastwise activities.



Photos show members' trip to Lee Bay 21/3/11, where great finds included Devonshire Cup Coral (right), Conger & a rare Pistol Prawn.



## SUMMER ON THE SHORE

Summer means a dozen public events for Project Officer Jim Monroe's Safari Team of 20 volunteers. They will be timed to take advantage of the lowest tides to allow access to the full range of life on the shore. The focus will be on animals of all sizes, including the microscopic, and appeal to adults as well as children. Most safaris are scheduled for school holidays and weekends (p2).

Our rocky shores are amongst the richest for marine life in the UK. Coastwise guides, all volunteers, aim to generate interest in, and respect for, the life on our shores - many of which are candidates for Marine Conservation Zone designation. To lead the safaris, find the animals and tell their stories, the team draws upon what has been learnt during the Our Coast programmes, as well as project work such as monitoring, beach profiling, and microscopy. This supplements training safari workshops and field visits with staff from Halsannery Field Centre, Marine Biological Association and Field Studies Centre, funded in 2010 by North Devon AONB, and in 2011 by Coastwise.

Last year's safari programme, our first, proved very popular and was focussed on Barricane Beach. This year we will cover a wider range of beaches, providing different habitats, including Westward Ho & Combe Martin on AONB Discovery Days at which we will also run microscope workshops to view tiny life forms collected from nearby beaches. The AONB's Sustainable Development Fund has provided a grant for microscopes (subsequently to be held locally), and Brunel Microscopes have generously donated a field microscope for the safaris.

## OUR COAST PROGRAMME

A full house of seventy or so members, new and old, full and associate, signed up for the Autumn term, ensuring lively meetings and good attendances.

Coastwise developed from the Our Coast course and now offers much more. Just how much more was the subject of the first session in which long-standing members introduced the projects with which they were involved.

A highlight of the programme was a presentation that had everything - science, beauty and drama. Leading underwater cameraman, Doug Anderson, gave Coastwise a privileged glimpse of the making of the BBC's forthcoming Frozen Planet series. Broadcaster and naturalist Kelvin Boot also proved master of word and image, using shells to demonstrate the beauty of nature's adaptations to the challenges of marine life, whilst encouraging us to explore the molluscs found on our shore.

Coastwise members were also given glimpses of marine life just beyond the shore. Tony Gussin of Barnstaple Rods 'n Reelers, offered the sea anglers' perspective, introducing the sea-fish they encountered. Sally Sharrock gave an enthusiastic introduction to the underwater world off our shores with photographs taken during divers' recording sessions whilst introducing the work of Seasearch. From the RSPB we gained more of a bird's eye view of our coastal habitats, and their future under collaborative management with the Environment Agency.

Intertidal life, the regular fare of Coastwise, was covered in an audience-participation armchair shore safari, and via special training sessions for summer shore safari volunteers.

Ilfracombe Sub-Aqua provided a friendly finale with an invitation to visit their flourishing club, and Ilfracombe Aquarium provided some wonderful close encounters with stars of the shore, to whet our appetite for summer explorations.

Our thanks to members who completed the appraisal forms, their comments will contribute towards planning the programme for autumn 2011.

## BIRDING TRIPS

Abundant avocets and a Long Tailed Duck contributed to a perfect January day for over 40 members on an RSPB cruise on the Exe, the south west's premier bird estuary.

Rather different but equally enjoyable, a later visit to the Taw led by Rob Jutsum provided memorable close views of flocks of godwit, redshank and dunlin, in flight, and feeding furiously on the narrow muddy margins revealed by the turning tide.

## EXCEPTIONAL EVENTS

Coastwise members were invited to some exceptional events. Our thanks to:

- Ted Oakes, for a showing of his BBC2 film *The Bear Family & me* at the Plough
- Devonshire Association (Bideford) for a talk by international seahorse expert Dr Heather Koldewey
- The British Naturalists' Association for Dr Keith Hiscock's celebratory talk on 40 years' marine conservation at Lundy

Each event was buzzing and Coastwise members were delighted to be in the thick of it.

## SUMMER PROGRAMME

Shore safaris, other events in italics

19 APRIL	CROYDE
11 am	Main (Ruda) slipway
14 MAY	WESTWARD HO!*
10 am	Main slipway
21 MAY	COMBE MARTIN*
2 pm	On beach
2 JUNE	SAUNTON
10.30 am	Main slipway
7 June	BAGGY WALK
10.30 am	Baggy NT car park
14 JUNE	SHORE THING ABBOTSHAM ✓
9.30 am	Kipling Torrs Car Park, WHO!
16 JUNE	WOOLACOMBE ☆
11 am	On Barricane beach
1 JULY	SHORE THING LEE BAY ✓
10.30 am	On beach
5 JULY	WOOLACOMBE **
1.30 pm	On Barricane beach
19 JULY	WOOLACOMBE **
1.30 pm	On Barricane beach
2 AUGUST	LEE BAY
1 pm	On beach
16 AUGUST	COMBE MARTIN
1 pm	On beach
31 AUGUST	WESTWARD HO!
1 pm	Main slipway
3 SEPTEMBER	ILFRACOMBE***

To be arranged

\*AONB Discovery Days - see website

✓Shore monitoring for national survey

☆ North Devon Festival event

\*\* Jointly with National Trust

\*\*\*Part of Sea Ilfracombe programme

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