Shores of South Devon (marine life interest association)

Steering Group Minutes

10th Meeting

8th June 2021 19:30 h, by Zoom

1. Present: Toby Sherwin (co-chair), Mike Puleston (co-chair), Peter Jonas, Anne Gwynn, Rob Morgan (Treasurer)
2. Apologies: Sue Watson-Bate, Gavin Watson-Bate, Ju Lewis
3. Minutes of last Meeting:
The minutes were accepted with a small change: The date of the next (i.e. this) meeting should have read 8th June 2021. Matters arising are discussed below.
4. Membership and Chairman’s update report (**TS**):
\* We have 1 new member making our total 39
\* Douglas Herdson gave a Zoom talk on 27 May about ‘Shore Fish of South West England’ in which he listed the great variety of shore fish that can be found our coast. The talk has been uploaded to our Youtube channel
\* Tamsyn Mann’s talk has already been seen by 139 viewers to date; Keith Hiscock’s talk is the next most popular with 170 views.
\* **TS** attended a Plover Rovers Zoom meeting. One of the SW coast walkers has been invited to give a talk at the Sidmouth Science Festival this summer. **TS** was not sure how SoSD could help Plover Rovers his summer.
5. Treasurer’s report (**RM**):
As of 8th June, the balance of the bank account stood at £178.05. We also hold £17.85 cash. This brings our total holdings to £195.90. Our present financial position is healthy. **TS** has a Zoom rental invoice of about £30 outstanding.
6. Safaris and Zoom talks:
\* **MP** and **TS** agreed earlier that we should postpone the talk by Prof Stephen Hawkins until the autumn. This was because of falling numbers at the talks in recent months and because **TS** will be unavailable to host the meeting. Prof Hawkins kindly agreed to the postponement and offered to hold it instead at the MBA, subject to a suitable relaxation in Covid restrictions.
\* The Steering Group asked **TS** to cancel our Zoom subscription until the Zoom talks restart. During the summer SG meetings will have to be held in blocks of 40 minutes.
\* **MP** has proposed holding an open safari (via Facebook) to study barnacles at Corbyn Head in the near future. Barnacle cyprids are still settling to it will be necessary to hold the safari in the near future. This will not be an official SoSD event as such.
7. Facebook
\* At the time of the meeting the Facebook site has remained at about 877 members but is still very active.
8. Rockpool project
**TS** and **MP** had a face to face meeting in the morning before the SG meeting where they went over the Sea-Changers grant opportunity mentioned in the May minutes. They decided that it would be difficult to make a convincing case for support at this time and decided not to proceed with the application. The main reasons for this were a) the emphasis in the Guidelines on the need to address “marine conservation threats”, and b) the lack of time and amount of work required to put the application together given that **TS** will be away for most of the time up to the submission date (18 June). Although this decision was regrettable in some ways it had nevertheless been a useful exercise in thinking about the practicalities of making such an application. (Incidentally the Dawlish Beach Hut Field Station idea, which is in abeyance at the moment, was seen as a more likely contender for support from Sea-Changers in the future).
Nevertheless, it was agreed that we should not give up on rockpool monitoring and when we meet at Bundle Head we should use **RM**’s protocol document as the basis for further discussion. The sort of things we will need to consider are what to observe and to what detail - for example should we just estimate percentage cover of the red, green and brown algae and forget about individual species, or should we also include indicator species? Some help here may be required from an expert at MBA.
9. Plans for the rockpool meeting at Bundle Head, Shaldon, on 27 June 2021,
LW (Teignmouth Approaches) is at 1506 BST, 0.67 m relative to Admiralty Chart Datum (by contrast the lowest tide in spring was 0.18 m). Meet at the Tunnel entrance at 1300 h sharp - if you are late find us on the rocks at the southern end of the beach. Afterwards those who can will reconvene at the Ode cafe above the car park to take stock. Please note that in summer the car park has been known to fill up so give good time for parking. Any problems contact **TS** on 07787 156295 or **MP** on 07432 152220.
10. AOB
A discussion about other possible plans for our rockpool investigations took place. **PJ** was very keen to explore ways in which we could undertake time series observations of the physical parameters of a rockpool over a series of tidal cycles. Ideally the sensors would include temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen and possibly pH. The plan would require the support of a scientist at a suitable university department or marine laboratory. In principle the group was in favour of this plan provided the right support (and funding) could be found, although **TS** expressed doubts about the practical difficulties of fixing such instruments in the potentially extreme physical environment of a rock pool. It was agreed that **PJ** would pursue his sources locally and **TS** would contact Prof. Mike Burrows at SAMS, Oban who has attached sensors to rocky shores in the past.
**TS** has been invited to give a talk about the sea shore at the Dawlish Carnival on 18th August, and has agreed that SoSD should contribute to the Great Big Green week being held in Dawlish between 18th and 26th September.
11. Next meeting:
The next Zoom meeting will be held on Tuesday 6th July at 1930 h.
12. The meeting ended at 21:00 h.