

North Pennines e-news July 2023

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Welcome to the July issue of the North Pennines e-newsletter. We're sharing news of our new mobility scooter network, and looking forward to more people being able to explore places in the North Pennines AONB and Geopark.

There are nature, landscape and heritage activities for children and families throughout the summer - starting with archaeology taster days on 15 and 16 July. If your outdoor adventurers are a little younger, why not try our Bowlees Explorer sessions every Thursday in August?

We also have blogs about our work looking after the North Pennines and helping people connect with this special landscape. Read our blog with our friends Taj and Hakan, sharing their thoughts on nature and Islam. We also share an account of how we came to find Mesolithic flint microliths on Mickle Fell.

Have you seen?



Snow in July? Cottongrass is a familiar sight on our peatlands and when it's in full flower, it can look like patches of snow on the hills in the middle of summer. But as well as being beautiful, cottongrass is useful in bare peat restoration. It grows via rhizomes and so it anchors the peat down and prevents damage from frost heave.

The two types of cottongrass found in the North Pennines AONB are common (multiple cotton seeds) and hare's tail (single cotton seed).

Common cottongrass likes wetter places while hare's tail is found more on the drier plateaus.

Opening up access to the North Pennines



A network of Trampler all-terrain mobility scooters has been launched in the North Pennines AONB and UNESCO Global Geopark, enabling more people to access the countryside.

North Pennines Outdoor Mobility has been developed by the North Pennines AONB Partnership, with funding of £44,000 from Defra's Access for All programme. Additional funding of £11,000 came through the AONB Partnership's Tees-Swale: naturally connected programme, funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Working with partners across the AONB, there will be five sites across the North Pennines with one mobility scooter available at each location, and eight identified routes to explore and enjoy the landscape. The sites are Bowlees Visitor Centre, Killhope, Talkin Tarn Country Park, High Force Waterfall and Derwent Waterside Park (from 24 July).

Photo credit: Ben Potts

[Read more about the routes available and how to book](#)

Caretakers of the Earth

Over the last two years, communities from the North Pennines and Tyneside have been getting together, sharing experiences, and finding commonalities, as part of our work towards the North Pennines as a landscape for everyone. Farmers from Sinderhope hosted a visit on their farms by members of Gateshead's Turkish community and Frosterley Women's Institute have been sharing hospitality with the Suffrage Sisters, a women's support group in Newcastle.

From 28 June to 2 July Muslim people around the world celebrated Eid al-Adha, marking the culmination of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and honouring the sacrifice of Ibrahim. We asked our friends Hakan Akarli and Taj Khan to chat with Scarlet, one of our community engagement team, about Eid, nature connection and Islam.



We need your help



Removing invasive plants

On 21 July we have a volunteer session to remove invasive garden Lady's-mantle from a site in Upper Teesdale. These garden escapees threaten the important native flora in the area.

[More information](#)



Pulling spruce to save peat

On Bog Day (23 July), we have a volunteer session to help remove invasive spruce saplings from a restored blanket bog. Help us protect our peatlands from damage from these invasive plants.

[Register on our volunteer system](#)

A needle in a peat bog



The North Pennines AONB Partnership has carried out peatland restoration work on a vast area of blanket bog which totals over three times the size of Newcastle. Sometimes this work throws up something unexpected, something that is a little bit like finding a needle in a haystack, or, in this case, a needle in a peat bog.

During one of our recent historic environment assessments, which are carried by qualified archaeologists prior to work starting on any of our peatland restoration sites, the archaeology team made a tiny but significant find. Working high on the North Pennine fells, near to Mickle Fell in County Durham, they unearthed two small flints. They are relatively small at about 5cm in length, but an amazing find. They are thought to be flint microliths from the Mesolithic period, probably about 3500-6500 BCE. The archaeologists have suggested these flints are parts of an arrowhead, due to the shapes, which would most likely have been from people hunting in the area.

[Read the blog on our website](#)

Summer events



Wild Wednesdays

Wild Wednesdays are our summer holiday sessions at Bowlees Visitor Centre. Outdoor, nature-based activities for children aged 5 to 12. £3 per child. Themes include marvellous meadows, campfire cooking, and what's beneath our feet. Search dates and [book here](#).



Fun for under 5s (dates in August)

Bring your little explorers to Bowlees Visitor Centre for outdoor fun for under 5s and their families with hands-on nature-themed activities to get you exploring. [Find out more](#).



Archaeology taster days (July and August)

We have opportunities for children aged seven to 16 to take part in archaeology taster days alongside community archaeology group, Altogether Archaeology, during July and August.

[View dates and book here](#).

Fellfoot Sounds (19 to 20 August)

Listen to the landscape and the



sounds among the stones with a family-friendly campout near Long Meg. This immersive, environmentally-friendly event is in a stunning dark skies area where you can listen, make, enjoy live performance, music and workshops. Day tickets are still available. [Book here](#)

[Visit our events page for our full programme](#)

Visit Bowlees

It's peak hay meadow season - why not walk from Bowlees and see the abundant meadow flowers in all their glory? Head across the Wynch Bridge, then take the path towards Holwick and you'll see some magnificent meadows, with rare and important species. Be quick though. Towards the end of July, farmers will be cutting the meadows to provide high quality fodder for stock over the winter and the spectacle will be over for another year.



In July we have an exhibition of photographic images by artist Elaine Vizor, made with and without a camera. Elaine will exhibit vintage cameraless photography, cyanotype prints, and both original and digital artworks. The traditional vintage cyanotype process is the oldest form of photography dating back to 1842. The original digital art pieces on show, depicting Teesdale scenes, are images transformed into 'artlike' pieces using modern digital tools. [Read more](#)

Open daily, 10am to 5pm.

Image shown: Fern in lime kiln by Elaine Vizor

[Bowlees Visitor Centre website](#)

Pennine PeatLIFE success

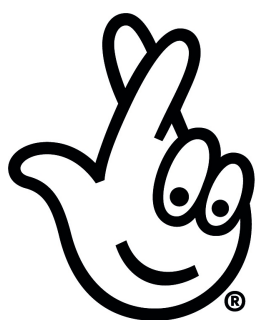


The Pennine PeatLIFE project began in 2017 with an aim to restore damaged peatlands across the protected landscapes of the North Pennines AONB, the Yorkshire Dales National Park, Forest of Bowland AONB and Nidderdale AONB.

The project ended last month and exceeded restoration targets, collectively restoring over 1780 hectares of blanket bog.

Pennine PeatLIFE was led by the North Pennines AONB Partnership in collaboration with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and the Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership. The project received €3.8 million from the European Union LIFE programme, and was co-financed by the Environment Agency, Northumbrian Water, United Utilities and Yorkshire Water.

[Read our summary of Pennine PeatLIFE](#)



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