



# The Sundew

## Cumbria BogLIFE project newsletter

**Welcome** to the Bolton Fell Moss edition of *The Sundew*. In this issue:

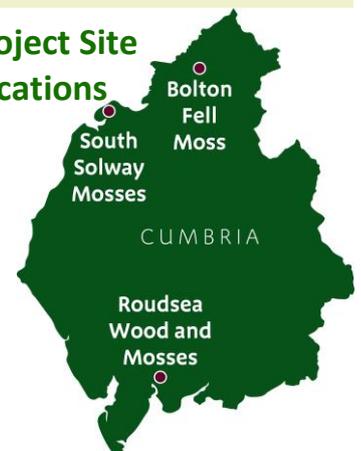
- We have now completed all planned restoration works at Bolton Fell Moss – find out what we have achieved and how it is looking.
- Bolton Fell Moss Consultation – we hope to declare Bolton Fell Moss as a National Nature Reserve and we asked you what you would like to see. So what happens next?
- The cultural history of peat bogs – what do bogs mean to you? Are they still important to the local community? And how can you help us research this subject?
- Moths of the Moss – what bog beauties have been seen at Bolton Fell Moss?

### Bringing Cumbria's Raised Bogs to LIFE



Bog Rosemary with its pink, bell shaped flowers, is a relative of Heather and a bog specialist.

### Project Site Locations



## Restoration works complete!

Major bog restoration works funded through the LIFE project have now been completed. This is a huge milestone for the Cumbria BogLIFE project and a turning point in the future of Bolton Fell Moss. Here is what we have achieved on the site:



### Fixing the water table

This is what we started with (above) – vast areas of bare peat and huge drains that moved water off the bog. We want the water to stay on the bog, so the first job was to block the drains.



*Peat bunding holding water on the bog surface*

We also re-profiled the peat. This involved creating peat bunds, which hold a skim of water on the surface of the bog, as well as re-profiling the steep cut faces. A total 303.5ha of ground works took place to re-establish the water table!

As well as sucking up large amounts of water from the bog through their roots, scrub and trees had created big cracks in the peat, which act like drains, further drying out the peat. In order to fix these, we had to remove the trees growing on the peat, before filling the cracks.



*Tree removal around the edges of Bolton Fell Moss*

### Re-vegetating the bare peat

The final step in the restoration process was to re-vegetate the areas of bare peat. This was achieved by harvesting a mix of heather, grasses and Sphagnum mosses from donor sites, and spreading the resulting “mulch” across the peat. We call this “the living carpet”. The chopped up grasses form a protective layer, giving the Sphagnum a chance to grow. In total, 224.52ha of bare peat was re-vegetated this way.



*Before works (top photo) – vast areas of bare peat where nothing could grow. After works (bottom photo)- The water table is restored and the living carpet has been applied.*

### What Next?

Although a lot of work has been carried out, it really is just the beginning of the restoration process. We have put the right conditions in place to allow restoration to happen – now we have to be patient and wait for nature to take its course. To help us understand how our work is affecting the bog, we will continue to monitor the vegetation, greenhouse gas emissions and hydrology.

We are also hoping that Bolton Fell Moss will be declared as a National Nature Reserve. We are currently working through this process, which can be quite lengthy! You can find a bit more information about this on the next page, and there will be more updates in the next newsletter.

## Community Consultation

Natural England are in the process of declaring Bolton Fell Moss as a National Nature Reserve (NNR). If we are successful in achieving this, we will extend existing Walton Moss NNR to create Bolton Fell and Walton Mosses NNR. As part of this process we asked the local community what sort of NNR they would like to see.

We held several events to speak to people and find out what they would like to see. This included a drop in day at Hethersgill Village Hall, site visits to Bolton Fell Moss, attendance at Brampton Farmers Market with an information stall, a talk and discussion with Bewcastle Heritage Group and a session with Bewcastle Scouts. There was also an online questionnaire. Thank you to everyone who contributed their views!

We asked questions around three main themes: access, information/interpretation and community involvement. We also asked people if they had any ideas as to what the concrete area around the factory site could be used for.



*Site Officer, Deborah Land, giving a talk at the drop in Day at Hethersgill Village Hall*

We have now gathered all of the responses, and the next step will be to go through these and work out what the priorities are within the community, which in turn will help us to make decisions and prioritise what we do on site.

However, what comes through strongly is that people want to be able to access and walk on the moss, and there is concern that less mobile people should be able to enjoy some access. Also, celebrating and sharing the history and heritage of the site through any interpretation that might be developed is seen as very important.

The National Nature Reserve declaration process is still ongoing at the moment, and updates on this will be made available once more progress and decisions have been made.

## Bolton Fell Moss – what does it mean to you?

Bolton Fell Moss has been valued for its natural resources for many years and until recently was milled for peat for the horticultural industry. Now that this has stopped, does it still have value to the local community? And is there any value in the work Natural England are doing to restore the bog?

You can help us answer these questions in two ways. Firstly you can fill in our online questionnaire by following this link: <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/EA85X/> Or if you have more time and fancy exploring the site, you can join us on a **Photowalk on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> August**



*Peat cutting – Bolton Fell Moss was once valued for its natural resources and the jobs it provided. What about now?*

### Photowalk on Bolton Fell Moss

**30<sup>th</sup> August 2018 from 10am**

This is a social walk around Bolton Fell Moss with a twist! We want to find out what makes this site important to you. We will arm you with a camera and you will take photos of whatever inspires you along the way. Afterwards we will head off for a cup of tea and cake so we can discuss everyone's photos. As well as helping us find out what you value about the bog, your photos will also help us with future interpretation ideas and could even end up in a leaflet or on an information board!

Free event but due to limited cameras, booking is needed. For more information and booking, phone Keeley Spate on 07881 255343 or email: [keeley.spate@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:keeley.spate@naturalengland.org.uk)

## Moths of the Moss

Our moth monitoring volunteer, Guy Broome, has been out with his light trap and camera once again. Here are just a few beautiful species he has found at Bolton Fell Moss this year. (Photos ©Guy Broome)



**Emperor Moth:**  
A moth of open moorland that feeds on heather. This one is female – males are more orange in colour.



**Lunar Thorn Moth:**  
So called because of the “lunar” or moon shaped white markings on its wings (if you look closely!)



**Dark Tussock Moth:**  
A moorland species that feeds on heather. This is a hairy moth with five tussocks of dense hair along its back.

## Visiting Bolton Fell Moss

There is no public access to Bolton Fell Moss at present. Access with Natural England staff is possible for accompanied groups and during advertised community events. If you would like to arrange a group visit, please get in touch.

## Interested in seeing our other BogLIFE sites?

**Roudsea Woods and Mosses NNR:** Near Haverthwaite. Permissive access (a free permit) is required to visit this very special reserve, which Natural England leases from the Holker Estate. Find out more in the [reserve leaflet](http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5794526008442880) <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5794526008442880>

### Wedholme Flow

The reserve is part of the South Solway Mosses, and is open access so you can visit at any time! Wedholme Flow can be found near the villages of Newton Arlosh and Kirkbride. If you wish to arrange a guided walk, please get in touch.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cumbrias-national-nature-reserves/cumbrias-national-nature-reserves>

## Did you know...?

Because Cumbria BogLIFE is a funded project, we can offer walks, talks and educational events to community groups and schools **free of charge**. Contact us to find out more.

**LIFE+** This project is being generously supported by the European Union’s LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity Programme, which is the funding instrument for the environment. Funding is awarded to best practice, innovative demonstration projects that contribute to the objectives of **Natura 2000** - a network of the very best areas for wildlife across Europe.

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