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Tel: Debbie Armstrong  
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## Solway Super Stars

Story by:  
Norman & Florence Hammond

Now with the month of June, the keen and withering blasts of spring, which usually blow with such direful persistence in April and May, are at last being superseded by soft west winds, equipped with health and oxygen from the luxuriant vegetation of the tropical lands where they have given birth.

In no other month does Nature exhibit so many and such varied evidences throughout the Solway Firth & Plain by giving so full and glowing a picture. Woods, meadows, rivers, hills and valleys, all vie with each other in presenting their various charms to the delighted observer; but no scene can advance stronger claims on the observers' attention at this season than that of the Solway Firth sea-shore, our very own Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Let us wander along our extensive promenade. On one hand is the sea: its surface is rippled by the fresh breeze; the tide is gently encroaching on the sands; the wavelets falling in quick succession, utter their murmurs in a monotone not unmusical to a poet's ear. On the other hand, there are rocks and boulders whose bases have for a thousand years resisted the storms of winter. High overhead, the sky is of that same deep blue, which we see, reflected in the Solway Firth waters beneath; and here and there far aloft are clouds of the kind which meteorologists tell us never indicate rain. Far out at sea, are a few local shrimpers, while only a few hundred yards off, a flock of gulls are floating

on the waves, screaming to each other as if discussing the probabilities of a contemplated attack on the next shoal of small fry that make their appearance near the surface.

None but very ordinary observers can resist the attraction which heaven, and earth, and sea thus unite in presenting to the visitor of the sea shore; and so, without any disparagement to the special charms of purely inland rural scenes, we reiterate our conviction that in this lovely month of June no charms of natural scenery exceed those of our Solway Firth sea-shores.

Let us seat ourselves in the shade of the Pine trees, to take in the full panoramic picturesque setting, and no longer resist the spirit of contemplation, which speaks to us in these whispering waves.

What an inexhaustible fund of strange and marvellous knowledge does our Solway Firth contain! What mysteries amid its depths! What wonders in the structure and form of its inhabitants! In its tides and currents how much that is marvellous and interesting! In its storms and calms how much that is grand and sublime!

Thankfully no supernatural aid or direction is required to enable us to perceive the objects with which our Solway Firth seashores furnish us. They are many and various. They all belong more or less to Natural History in its more comprehensive acceptance; and Natural History is itself a fascinating study.

We must then consider the aspect, the character, and the structure of our Solway Firth sea-shores; the Firth water itself with its special laws and history; marine vegetation and

littoral plants; and a great variety of living beings which either make their abode continually on our shores, or only visit them from time to time.

Such objects, so many and so various, invest our local sea shores with the greatest interest, for the most diligent and industrious observer cannot, with all the labour involved, exhaust the store, even of the microscopic objects alone, which our Silloth-on-Solway West sea-beach yields.

But be warned, however, that to reap the full advantage with which such studies are capable of providing, some basic knowledge is required as well as diligence and attention.

The following very simple illustration will be sufficient to explain this.

Let us suppose, for example, a person entirely ignorant of the botany of field flowers, having no more acquaintance with one flower or another, as regards its structure, its functions, its habits, or its qualities and having a ramble through fields or woods in June would present little more than the fact that the hedgerows, the meadows, and the trees are again assuming their cheerful aspect after the long winter sleep. The lack of the basic knowledge of botany deprives that person of numberless pleasing impressions, which would otherwise be made upon the mind by the appearance of those objects in the vegetable kingdom.

Hopefully this series of SOLWAY SUPERSTARS will assist our readers with the essential basic information to help improve and strengthen our knowledge, as our rambles by the seashore are no less applicable to a walk among the rustic places of the inland country.



Buster Bee  
by Georgina Enderby  
aged 10  
from Holm Cultram Abbey School