

## Solway Superstars

The Solway Coast AONB area of the south Solway Firth has a wealth of wildlife and history. From the tide lapped shores, through the Solway Plain and up to the Caldbeck Fells we have just seen one of the best display of autumn colours, following a wonderful summer, for a long time. Late November changes arrived with wind and rain plus our first frosts removing the leaves from the trees and any larch about will have lost their golden coat of needles.

Apart from the Pine plantations on Silloth green, all deciduous trees will have lost their leaves, because to retain them would risk disease from tiny microbes and death, and also the massive canopies of broad leaves we see in summer would be a fatal resistance to the severe autumn and winter

gales and so November this year has been the time when they prepare for winter. Millions of tons of golden leaves have fallen to the ground in a blaze of colour to leave the trees bare apart from the superb and fascinating lichen flora now easily seen.

Leaves take in carbon dioxide that we breathe out and these tree food factories produce the sugars and starches required to produce the green chlorophyll in the leaves to help them grow during next summer.

As the trees stop growing in the autumn and winter the green chlorophyll is destroyed and the beautiful autumn orange and yellow carotenoid pigments are revealed, these are usually hidden by the green in the summer. The browns and reds are made from

anthocyanins, which usually colour fruit and flowers.

Whilst this autumn change has been with us since the dawn of time modern technology can now trace this vivid display and track the advance of autumn across Western Europe at a rate of approx: 40 miles a day.

Local Winter Walks can now be very rewarding on fine frosty days. Go north around



Bruce by Stuart Todd aged 10 from Silloth Primary School

Grune Point or along the Marsh Road with a high spring tide to find the sky darkened with the vast skeins of geese from Calvo Marsh and with huge roosts of waders, oysters catchers, redshanks, knot, curlew and godwit. You are spoiled for choice. Keep an eye out in the waters of Moricambe Bay for our local Harbour porpoises.

Go south along the promenade and the Cumbria Coastal way via the west beach and again you will have brilliant flying displays from vast flocks of Dunlin, Turnstone and the ever friendly Sanderling, whilst just inland you could be lucky to see a Red Kite probably a long range explorer from across the Solway Firth and the Dee-Ken Valley in the Glenken Galloway hills.

If you are not able to get out for these walks

keep an eye open for the very colourful and beautiful Goldfinch as they investigate gardens for food sources. Their distinctive red facial markings and gold black wings make them easy to identify.

Goldfinches are primarily seedeaters being especially fond of sunflower and or nyjer seed. Once a good food source is found in your garden prepare for an explosion of colour and



S.A.F.C. Bee by Nicole White aged almost 10 from Holme St. Cuthbert School

the sweet sound of their 'tinkling' bell like calls, all of which will brighten up the duller of winter days.

Now is also the time to make your garden wildlife friendly for the coming summer. Clean out any nest boxes you may have as most nests harbour flees and other parasites, which can infest next year's young birds. Never use insecticides or flea powders to kill off any parasites, only use boiling water, which will allow the nest box to settle nicely for next year's breeding season.

If you have any problems or would like further advice, or you see something very special, call into the Discovery Centre and we will gladly help you. Norman & Florence Hammond, Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Tel: 016973 20440, E-mail: csearchnw@tiscali.co.uk.

**SPAR**

*For all your Grocery needs*

Fresh Meat, Wines & Spirits, Home Bake  
Lottery & Video Rental

**Open 7 days a week**

Spar Supermarket, Solway Street, Silloth

**Clive's  
Shape  
'n'  
Style**

Matrix Appointed  
Salon

Unisex  
hairdressing salon  
& sunbed parlour

30 Eden Street, Silloth  
Tel: 016973 31378

**Regalo**

**Bringing a piece  
of Italy to  
the Solway Coast**

Stocking a large  
selection of:  
**Italian & Local Gifts  
including**

Capo di Monte  
porcelain

**Fine Italian Glassware**

Silverware &  
Stainless Steel

Border Fine Arts  
Classic &  
Studio Collections

Heron Glass  
Hot Diamonds  
and  
Rennie Mackintosh  
Jewellery

4 Criffel Street  
Silloth-on-Solway  
Tel: 016973 32770

**Winters  
Post Office**

Newspapers ~ Magazines  
Sweets ~ Rock Novelties  
Gifts ~ Toys  
Greetings Cards ~ Postcards  
Fax & Photocopying service

Eden Street, Silloth (opposite the Golf Hotel)  
Shop: 016973 31323 ~ PO: 016973 32957

*Oak Leaf  
Hardware*

Everything for DIY  
and Gardening in stock now

We stock tools, materials, paint & decorating  
equipment, compost & gardening products,  
Shell gas, caravan products.

Try us... if you need it - we can get it!

8-10 Eden Street ~ Silloth ~ Tel: 016973 31355  
Just look for the Red Indian Brave!

**Golf  
Hotel**

Open all day for:

Morning Coffees  
Bar Meals  
12.00 - 2.00  
& 6.00 - 9.00

Extensive menu plus  
daily specials  
&  
Traditional  
Sunday Roast Lunches  
Afternoon Teas

Why not treat yourself  
in our  
Restaurant  
table d'hôte dinner  
£17.95  
also a la carte

We use  
fresh local produce  
and do  
all our own baking

Tel: 016973 31438

**Johns  
Plaice**

Take Away  
& Restaurant

*Happy New Year  
to all our customers*

20 Seater  
traditional fish restaurant  
Open every day except Mondays  
(apart from Bank Holidays)

12 Solway Street  
Silloth-on-Solway  
Tel: 016973 31597  
www.johnsplaice.co.uk

**CHIROPODIST**

Lynn Devine  
MSSCh. MBChA.

**Home visits by appointment**

Lynnwood  
5 Pine Terrace  
Silloth, CA7 4DT  
Tel: 016973 31632

*Is your  
computer slow?*

*Two computers on  
the internet at  
the same time?*

*Do you want  
your computer  
to do more?*

*Is your software  
working properly?*

**We have the solutions!**

**Computer  
Services**

call  
Mark or Jonathan  
016973 32089

**Johns  
Plaice**

Take Away  
& Restaurant

*Happy New Year  
to all our customers*

20 Seater  
traditional fish restaurant  
Open every day except Mondays  
(apart from Bank Holidays)

12 Solway Street  
Silloth-on-Solway  
Tel: 016973 31597  
www.johnsplaice.co.uk

*Occasions  
Florists*

Fresh & Silk  
Flowers

for all occasions plus  
a selection of Gifts

**Free deliveries in the  
Silloth area**

13 STATION ROAD,  
SILLOTH  
Tel: 016973 31449

**Wheelchair  
Hire**

**Nationwide Service**

**Call Free  
0800 108 5678**

www.fredwalton.co.uk