



# SHOTLINES

SAVOURING A pint of local real ale while taking in the stunning views of the Farne Islands can now help to ensure the survival of marine mammals in the North Sea.

The Bamburgh Castle Inn in Seahouses, famed for its breathtaking location overlooking one of Northumberland's dramatic stretches of coastline, has teamed up with British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) charity to raise money for vital equipment including a marine mammal medic kit, dolphin stretcher, seal kennel and bag to help sick and stranded porpoises, dolphins, whales and seals.

As the Inn's charity of the year for 2014, BDMLR will receive 5p from every pint of house ale sold - the appropriately named Hadrian & Border Farne Island - and will also benefit from a series of fundraising events organised by the Inn throughout the year.

The Bamburgh Castle Inn general manager, Peter O'Brien said: "In the storms before Christmas, dozens of grey seal pups were washed up on the beaches near to



us, which really brought home how important BDMLR's work is.

"The view of the Farne Islands is one of the Bamburgh Castle Inn's biggest attractions for visitors and locals alike, which makes us feel a certain sense of responsibility towards the islands and their wildlife.

"The Farnes are home to the biggest population of grey seals in the UK. The islands attract thousands of divers and sightseers every year and we also benefit from these visitors when they come to enjoy our great food, drink and hospitality at The Bamburgh Castle Inn. By supporting the work of BDMLR this year, we're putting something back."

BDMLR is a voluntary network of marine mammal medics which relies entirely on donations to run

the service. Teams operating in England, Scotland and Wales respond to call outs from the public, police, coastguard and animal welfare groups. They also train emergency services staff to deal with marine mammals in distress. Volunteers are on call 24 hours a day, every day.

Richard Ilderton, BDMLR's area coordinator for the North East said: "We're delighted the Bamburgh Castle Inn has chosen us as its charity of the year. The money will help us to buy a marine mammal medic kit of essential supplies that our volunteers use to help stranded animals.

"Anyone who becomes interested in our work through the Bamburgh Castle Inn's campaign can also train to become one of our volunteers on the Northumberland coast, by taking our Marine Mammal Medic Course. You don't have to be a diver to become one of our volunteers."

Thanks are extended to Seahouses BDMLR volunteers Lyndsey Morris and Andrew Smith and BDMLR fundraiser Corinne Gordon for their help in organising this sponsorship.

You can find out more at: [www.bamburghcastlehotel.co.uk](http://www.bamburghcastlehotel.co.uk) and [www.bdmlr.org.uk](http://www.bdmlr.org.uk).

## Cheers To You



Image courtesy of Charlie Phillips

KNOWING HOW much readers of **SCOTTISH DIVER** enjoy their photography, it is good news that following its relaunch in the Year of Natural Scotland, the Scottish Nature Photography Festival will return on 13/14 September of this year. Held at Scottish Natural Heritage's Battleby Centre just outside of Perth, the Festival will feature inspiring speakers, amazing imagery, informative workshops and trade stands as well as the chance to mingle with like-minded photography enthusiasts.

The Festival allows those attending to enjoy the images and commentary from some of the best photographers at work today. This year

organiser's are introducing a new format featuring nine top speakers over the course of the weekend with a different programme each day. Speakers include Cairngorms-based Peter Cairns and Charlie Phillips who will be sharing some of his amazing dolphin photography.

Charlie is an award winning professional wildlife photographer based at North Kessock in the Highlands of Scotland. He also has the post of Dolphin Field Officer with the UK-based marine charity Whale and Dolphin Conservation (formerly WDCS) and his working life is now dedicated to studying and photographing the resident Bottlenose dolphins in the Moray Firth.

Visitors to the Festival can be sure of an intriguing and entertaining variety of topics from the natural world - it promises to be a weekend not to be missed. For more information about the Festival, visit [www.wildmedia.org/SNPF.asp](http://www.wildmedia.org/SNPF.asp)

## Nature On Show

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# Dolphins In The Street



FOR 10 WEEKS this summer, the streets of Aberdeen will come alive with giant sculptures of dolphins. The sculptures will be designed and painted by local artists, creating an arts trail around the city and showcasing Aberdeen's rich cultural offering.

Aberdeen is the latest place to benefit from the successful Wild in Art sculpture projects. Wild in Art is the UK's leader in the development, management and production of spectacular, mass-appeal public art events which engage residents and tourists alike, through the creation of citywide trails of uniquely painted sculptures. The dolphin sculptures will be sponsored by local businesses and then a unique design will be painted on each one by a range of artists.

The project will see a dolphin trail set

up around the city with money raised from an end of event auction going to Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC) and the ARCHIE Foundation, the charity which supports sick children at the Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital. Previous projects like this one have seen an increase in tourist activity in the chosen area, with local business, hotels, shopping centres, offices and retail units all benefiting.

From Gorillas in Norwich, Gromits in Bristol and SuperLambBananas in Liverpool, the sculptures from previous trails have become loved by residents and visitors alike. WDC's events and fundraising manager, Stine Bang commented: "The fact that dolphins frequently bring a smile to people's faces when they see them never ceases

to amaze us. These graceful, intelligent and social creatures hold a special place in our hearts yet they face many threats. The Wild Dolphins event will not only raise awareness and vital funds for our work, but will also bring a smile to the faces of local people and tourists alike when they see these big sculptures on the streets of Aberdeen."

The dolphin sculpture has been inspired by the bottlenose dolphins who live in the wild on the doorstep of Aberdeen - named as one of the best places to go dolphin watching in the UK.

You can find out more by visiting: [www.wilddolphins.org.uk](http://www.wilddolphins.org.uk).

## Paul Toomer Joins RAID

RAID (Rebreather Association International Divers) recently announced the appointment of Paul Toomer as Director of Diver Training. Paul is a force of nature in the diving world and his unique approach is legendary. Since becoming professional in 1997 Paul has reached the top of two leading diver training agencies; teaching divers, instructors and instructor trainers.

Paul took up technical diving in 2000 and after a decade of teaching rebreather and technical courses, he was headhunted by Scuba Schools International, where he worked as SSI's Director of Training.

Paul said: "Joining RAID is hugely exciting because we have so much potential. We are looking outside the diving industry to source ideas on how to kick it up a level. I have just read an article in a surf publication and found it inspirational. The magazine piece discussed how the 'suits' (big business) had sucked the life out of the sport and the way the 'salts' (the surfers) were trying to regain control.

"The parallel with the diving industry is striking. People would rather not pay to be lectured to; they pay to have fun. I see RAID as the vehicle to do this through our

comprehensive online training system. Divers want 'state of the art' training where they have total control through a transparent online system, at whatever time or location is convenient for them."

For more details visit: [diveraid.com](http://diveraid.com)



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We are pleased to announce that Divelife has been voted WINNER of 'Best Retailer' and 'Best UK Dive Centre' in the SPORT DIVER magazine awards 2014.



# Nippy Dipping

**Grampian Branch helped out at CLIC Sargent's 2013 Nippy Dippers event. Branch Secretary Edna Ewan reports on the freezing fun that was had by all at the New Year's Day fundraiser ...**

HOW WOULD you fancy a dip in the harbour at Stonehaven on New Year's Day but without the comfort of a dry suit? Every year lots of people do just that to raise funds for CLIC Sargent, the children's cancer charity.

ScotSAC's Grampian Branch was approached in December 2013 with a request to provide in-water safety cover for the event. New Year's Day is not the easiest day to find willing volunteers to stand in a harbour for a couple of hours, but four members turned up at the appointed hour, prepared to stand about in the shallows in case any of the 'nippy dippers' got into

difficulty or ventured too far out. 'Some chance' we all thought, of them staying in long enough or going deep enough to even get their hair wet.

None of us had witnessed this event before, so we weren't sure what to expect. We were to space ourselves out around the area where the swimmers would run into the water.

At the appointed hour, just after 11.00am a horn sounded and around 40 to 50 people ran screaming and shouting into the water which turned out to be 6 degrees. Few stayed in for very long and not many were in any further than hip high. However, one

young man, a five time veteran of the event had been offered £200 for the charity from the local newspaper if he stayed in for 10 minutes. By the time his ten minutes was up he was almost the same colour as the saltire suit he was wearing but he made it with a bit of encouragement from Grampian's divers.

It was all over very quickly and we, who were wearing drysuits, had nothing but admiration for those who dressed up as Santa Claus and pirates and donned various other costumes. We have since heard that the event raised around £12,000 for CLIC Sargent.

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