

Wetlands – Outreach & eDNA

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Outreach

The last few months involved lots of engagement for our Darwin Initiative funded Wetlands Project with different audiences across different channels. Steffi Carter hosted a year 10 work experience student for a couple of days, which provided him with an insight into Wetlands field and lab work. She visited the MOD's Mount Pleasant Complex to host a 'pond dipping' event for families and to give an evening talk about both the Soil Mapping and the Wetlands Project. Farmer's Week was the focus for July, which involved a SAERI stall at the Expo with a freshwater invertebrate ID challenge and presentations about the Wetlands Project, ditching practices followed by discussions about ditching practices and a ditching questionnaire. An article about the Wetlands project as well as the results of the ditching questionnaire were subsequently published in 'The Wool Press'.

A Falkland Islands Peatland Interest Group – Peaty Pals – was instigated by Frin Ross at Falklands Conservation and is now co-organised and co-hosted by Steffi and Frin. The group meets informally during the Falklands' lunch hour with the chance for overseas and camp participants to dial in virtually. One or two presentations are given, which is followed by discussions afterwards. Two meetings have been held – July and October 2021 – and Steffi gave a presentation on greenhouse gas flux measurements at Wireless Ridge for the second meeting.

Please see images below for engagement highlights.

MPA Visits:



SAERI NEWS

Farmers Week:



Peaty Pals:



eDNA

Environmental DNA (eDNA) is genetic material present in the environment (e.g. water, soil), which is mainly deposited through faeces, urine and cells. Extraction, amplification and sequencing of the eDNA material can then provide details on the presence of species in that environment. Even though many facets of biological life go a bit quieter in the winter, freshwater invertebrates are still present and active,

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unseen and unbeknown under the water's surface. Steffi and field assistant Bree Forrer made the most out of the cold and calm winter days and collected samples from three ponds and two rivers, which Steffi then delivered to Swansea University, where the molecular work is currently taking place. Please see below for fieldwork highlights.

